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ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARIES

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Rev. R.Thomas,
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London, W.C.1.

Editorial Notes

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE. As in the previous year there were not enough nominations to fill all the vacancies, so that those who were nominated were automatically elected. These have co-opted further members, so that the Committee for 1959 is as set out opposite.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. It was found necessary to postpone this meeting, which had been fixed for February 19th at Dr. Williams's Library. The A.G.M. will now take place on Wednesday, April 8th, at 5 p.m. at Sion College Library, Victoria Embankment, London, E.C.4 (near Blackfriars Station); the business will include the adoption of annual report and statement of accounts.

VISIT TO CANTERBURY. On Tuesday, April 14th, there will be a visit to Canterbury, organised by SCOTAPLL. As this is primarily a local arrangement, members of SCOTAPLL have been individually notified of the details, but the Committee of SCOTAPLL have kindly invited other members of ABTAPL to join in the visit if they wish to do so.

Details, as supplied to members of SCOTAPLL, are set out inside the back cover of this issue, and the attention of members is especially drawn to the date by which applications, accompanied by the remittance, must be sent.

EXCHANGE OF BOOKS. This issue contains an account of the British National Book Centre, whose activities could be very helpful to any members of ABTAPL not already familiar with them. I have added a note about another possibility which might be more specifically helpful to our members, and I hope someone will be able to take the matter up.

CATALOGUE OF MANUSCRIPTS. Readers are invited to give special attention to the note on p.10 from the Librarian of the School of Oriental and African Studies; any member who knows of the existence of relevant items is asked to get into touch with the Librarian; two Research Assistants have been engaged for the project and one or other will visit any library to inspect available material.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION. One of the main purposes of this bulletin is to keep members informed of publications which would be of interest to them. A fair amount of such information has accumulated in recent months, and so the Committee has approved an additional issue, to appear in a month or two, devoted wholly to such details. The issue itself may well be smaller than usual, but it will be accompanied by separate leaflets provided by publishers, etc.

In this connection we are distributing with the current issue a list put out by the Library of the Royal Commonwealth Society, of its holdings of missionary journals. The Librarian agrees with me that his Library is one which would not ordinarily spring to mind as a repository of such periodicals, bu they serve as primary sources of information about many of the areas with which the Society is concerned. It seemed to me that some members of ABTAPL, at least, would find this list of interest and use, and any communications about it should be addressed to Mr. D.H. Simpson, Librarian, Royal Commonwealth Society, Northumberland Avenue, London, W.C.2.

It might be worth the while of some of our members to undertake the compilation of a comprehensive list of missionary journals, with indications of their location. If such a project were thought worth while, and if none of our members has the necessary time, it might be possible to offer the project to one of the Schools of Librarianship, to be undertaken by students there.

NEW PUBLICATION. It is a pleasure to welcome a publication by a member of ABTAPL who was originally a member of its committee also. I refer to Dr. Erik Routley's The English carol, published by Herbert Jenkins, 1958, at 25/-. It is described by the Church of England Newspaper as "Great value, as history, as a work of reference or as sheer entertainment".

R.J.H.

The British National Book Centre

In the June 1957 issue of this Bulletin Mr. Filon described the National Central Library's interlending service. Another co-operative field in which the Library is active is that of permanent transfer, as distinct from temporary loan, of books and periodicals which may be unwanted in one library, but very much needed elsewhere. This interchange service is run by the British National Book Centre, which (despite its individual title) is a regular department of the Library. It deals only with duplicate or redundant material, and not with the current publications produced, and frequently exchanged directly, by learned institutions.

Libraries have, no doubt, acquired books by mutually agreed exchange as long as there have been books and scholars. The rapid development of libraries in recent decades, and especially since the war, has, however, intensified the problems of finding room for expanding stocks, disposing responsibly of unwanted books and tracing out-of-print titles. Regular interchange helps towards solving all these problems.

Libraries have often circulated their own lists of "duplicates", but this can show a poor return for the considerable labour involved. An alternative centralised listing arrangement was proposed by the Library Association's University and Research Section in 1937, and as a result the National Central Library organised an interchange service for university and research libraries, with growing usefulness until its suspension during the War.

After the War the interchange idea was in the air, for the obvious reason that only by the generosity of some libraries could others replace what had been looted, bombed or burnt. Already a large central depot, the Inter-Allied Book Centre, had stored in London and later distributed to libraries all over the world some 600,000 books and over a million periodicals, very many of them saved from the "salvage drives". Towards the end of its activity it came under Unesco's control and moved into the National Central Library at Malet Place.

With this background, what was more natural than that the Library should re-introduce on a wider and larger scale the work for which pre- and post-war experience had shown so great a need? With Unesco's encouragement, and with an ad hoc increase in its Treasury grant-in-aid, the Library created its new department in 1948. It was called the British National Book Centre in recognition of Unesco's desire to see all over the world national book centres to facilitate both national and international exchange.

Although B.N.B.C. (as the Centre has inevitably become known) inherited a large undistributed stock from the Inter-Allied Book Centre, its method of working is designed to avoid the accumulation of material which characterised that establishment. Its intention

is rather to co-ordinate such efforts as libraries can themselves make, and not to provide a high-powered central organization to do everything. In principle it adopted the pre-war N.C.L. interchange method, and the present (somewhat more complex) arrangements are briefly described below.

Libraries themselves keep the books and periodicals of which they wish to dispose, sending to the Centre for each title only a card with the necessary details. This may be either the withdrawn catalogue card or one of the Centre's special cards (supplied free), with the offering library's name and address on the back. The Centre acknowledges these cards, giving an exact date after which it will have no exclusive call on the material concerned. This period of reservation is usually three to four months.

Using the cards submitted, the Centre compiles each month a Book List and Periodical List. Subscribing libraries receive these lists, and within one month inform the Centre (by list and item number) of what they would like. When all requests are marked up (with mnemonics for libraries' names) on the original offer cards, each is scrutinized and a decision made as to the most suitable destination for the item offered. The name and address of this library are then stamped (by addressing machine) on the card, which is later returned to its originating library. At the same time the receiving library is notified of what it may expect to receive. For periodicals the process is rather more complicated, because most of the entries in the list are of fragmentary offers by several libraries; conversely, each entry's contents may have to be distributed among many libraries. For this purpose the original cards are clearly useless and allocation instructions are typed on multiple forms. In due course the holding library despatches what is wanted and the receiving library refunds postage. This is the only payment involved, apart from the subscriptions mentioned below.

In addition to offers, each list contains a page or two of Wants. These are submitted by libraries on the understanding that they are out-of-print, not easily obtainable second-hand and are not in common demand. Not only are they advertised in the lists; they are also held in the Centre's standing file of Wants and checked against offers for some six months. At this point the Centre's policy of allocation could perhaps be outlined. There is no attempt to balance exactly what a library gives and what it receives. If any one item appropriate to its nature is requested by a single library, it is directed to that library. If, however, two or more libraries ask for the same work, then account is taken of the special collections, subject interests and co-operative work of each. On these and similar considerations the decision is made, influenced greatly by each library's interchange record.

It will be apparent that unless a book or periodical is worth all this trouble it should not be offered to B.N.B.C., and on the whole librarians understand the need for discrimination. B.N.B.C's small staff has to cope with a fluctuating and usually a too large "intake" and therefore often confines its attention to what is unlikely to be available elsewhere. Such works as recent university calendars, membership lists, cheap editions of English standard authors, school editions of foreign authors, and recently popular books of all kinds do not naturally find a place in B.N.B.C's lists.

It is with this limitation in mind that one must consider the round figure of 100,000 pieces (that is, books, periodical volumes and parts without distinction) at present redistributed annually. This implies a considerable membership and sizeable lists; there are in fact around 500 member libraries ranging in size from the very small specialised library to the very large university, municipal or industrial library; and in variety over such libraries as the British Museum, the Marx Memorial Library, Lambeth Palace Library, the Distillers' Company, Boots Pure Drug Co., the Atomic Energy Authority, the British Drama League, the National Coal Board, the Hawker-Siddeley Nuclear Energy Co., and the Central Council for the Care of Churches. Most of them are in the United Kingdom, but some thirty Colonial and Commonwealth university, public and special libraries are represented. About 450 of them subscribe to the lists (£3. 10. 0. for the book lists and £2. 10. 0. for the periodical lists per annum).

So much for the service as a whole: what in fact has been its use to the individual library? It is unlikely that so many libraries would put themselves to some trouble and expense in offering so much material through the Centre, and in most cases in scrutinizing at length the Centre's extensive lists, without good cause. Briefly the results are as follows: new and expanding libraries, which have perhaps little to give, receive standard material not wanted by established libraries. The latter benefit by being able to release valuable shelf space and (because of their relatively favourable "credit" status) by having a good claim to any much-wanted bibliography or out-of-print work which appears on the lists. Even well-run libraries have periodical gaps; many are now able to complete binding sets long incomplete. Special libraries may acquire material relevant to them, but too remote from the fields of most other libraries to attract competition. There seems to be no limit in size or kind to the type of library which finds the Centre's lists of interest - even the British Museum is regularly glad to receive, (sometimes from small municipal or special libraries), works not previously in its vast stock.

It is not suggested that all libraries can make equally good, or indeed any, use of the Centre. All kinds of factors affect the issue, e.g. the use made of the library, its present stock

acquisition policy, shortage of staff, and no doubt the type of material offered on the lists. Members of ABTAPL may be interested to know that the book list, (which is broadly classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification), usually contains several hundred titles in the 100 Philosophy and 200 Religion sections. Anyone interested may examine these for themselves by writing to the Superintendent, British National Book Centre, National Central Library, Malet Place, London, W.C.1, who will be pleased to send specimen lists and other details of the service.

A. Allardyce

[Editor's note.]

For fairly obvious reasons the B.N.B.C. works through the medium of lists of books and periodicals - it does not store and handle these items itself.

For some years the Medical Section of the Library Association has organised an exchange service, limited to its member libraries, on rather different lines, which might suit our Association if the necessary resources were available.

It was recognised that libraries which have surplus material and which need the shelf-space occupied by it would prefer to be able to dispatch the material itself, without having to make lists. Provided that a central repository were available this method would result in the accumulation of redundant material in one place, at the same time freeing valuable shelf-space in the member libraries.

It so happened that one of the medical libraries had a certain amount of shelf-space to spare, and was willing for its staff to devote time to administering the collection, so that the scheme came into effect and has proved a great success.

When the surplus material is received it is roughly classified and then shelved, the periodicals separately from books and pamphlets. It is open to all members of the scheme to visit the repository and to select what they want from whatever is available; therefore the only remaining problem is transport. There is no attempt to balance what is taken with what is given - the aim all the time is that the books and journals should find the most useful homes.

Some such scheme would almost certainly be of value to members of ABTAPL; there is plenty of scope for both this type of scheme and that administered by B.N.B.C., for whereas the private scheme would be available only to members of ABTAPL, there are many general libraries, both public and academic which regularly dispose of books within the ABTAPL field, and which must necessarily work through the medium of the B.N.B.C.

If there is any library within our Association which either has or knows of shelving which could be put at the disposal of such a scheme I should like to be informed, as it would then be possible to consider seriously the practicability of such an undertaking.

R.J.Hoy

Jews' College Library

Jews' College, a theological seminary founded in 1855 for the training of Rabbis, ministers, precentors and teachers for English-speaking Jewish congregations, has in the course of its century of existence accumulated a rich and varied collection of Judaica and Hebraica bearing on Jewish scholarship in its widest ramifications.

Although the College has been planned as early as the 1840's, and the appointment of a librarian was specifically mentioned in "The Outlines of a plan" (1852), the Library only came into existence in 1860 when the first gift of books to the College is recorded. From then onwards collections of books were either presented to, or deposited with, the College Library, so that it is now a conglomeration of libraries, of which two of the largest self-contained collections have maintained their separate identities, the other numerically smaller collections being submerged in the general College Library.

In 1860 the first large collection of Judaica and non-Judaica, that of the defunct Jews' and General Literary and Scientific Institution, was received at the College and this was followed in the next 20 years by further gifts donated by different private benefactors. However, inspite of these individual benefactions and donations, the Library was regarded as totally inadequate for the needs of a Jewish theological seminary, and indeed it was not until 1883 that the first really great collection of Judaica was acquired for the College, thus providing the nucleus of the College Library's collection of Hebraica as it is known to-day. This was the collection of the Rev.A.L. Green, a leading Anglo-Jewish minister and Honorary Secretary of the Collection since its inception, whose carefully selected collection of 6,000 volumes of Hebraica and Anglo-Judaica was presented to the College at his death. The collection is particularly rich in Talmudic and Rabbinic works, Responsa and Novellae, and in addition has a remarkable and unique collection of pamphlets dealing with the emancipation of the Jews in England, and Anglo-Jewish history and polemics in general. With the incorporation of this collection, Jews' College now for the first time became possessed of a Library worthy of a Jewish theological seminary.

The accession of the A.L.Green collection was followed in 1897 by that of the Judith Lady Montefiore College, Ramsgate, which since that date has been deposited in trust at Jews' College. Apart from being, again, a complete self-contained Library of Judaica, it contains in addition to the Library of Sir Moses Montefiore, the great Victorian philanthropist and centenarian, books and manuscripts from the Library of Dr. Leopold Zunz, a renowned nineteenth century German Jewish scholar,

and his collection of more than 1000 pamphlets dealing mainly with the history of the Jews and their emancipation.

At the turn of the century the Library was further enriched by a collection of about 9000 volumes of Orientalia, accumulated by the noted Anglo-Jewish preacher, Dr. Albert Löwy in his lifetime, and presented to the College after his death. This collection greatly strengthened the Library's stock of philological reference works in Oriental and Occidental languages.

By the outbreak of the First World War, the Library was thus composed of four distinct and great collections, namely, the College and Students' Library, incorporating the smaller benefactions and current accessions, the A.L.Green Library, the Montefiore Library and the Löwy Library, of which the last was finally also absorbed into the first. As a result, the Library was now generally recognised as the leading and most valuable Jewish Library in Europe, containing as it did the comprehensive collections of scholars and preachers, philanthropists and communal leaders.

During the inter-war period several small collections were again added, but it was not until after the Second World War that the Library increased its stock by thousands within less than a decade, necessitating a complete post-war reorganisation and modernisation. In 1947 for the first time, a library specifically devoted to Chazzanuth (Jewish liturgical music) was presented to the College; this was the collection of the Rev. H.Mayerowitsch, lecturer in Chazzanuth at the College for many years and a leading Anglo-Jewish precentor. This was followed in 1948 by the donation of the entire Library of the late Dr. Adolph Büchler, Principal of the College from 1905 to 1939; of this collection many books were subsequently used to form the nucleus of the quick-reference section of our present day Library. All these accessions, however, were completely overshadowed by the arrival between 1947 and 1952 of nearly 10,000 volumes of Hebraica and Judaica which are held in trust at the College. These books were among thos pillaged by the Nazis from Jewish homes in pre-war and war-time Europe, and were found after the war and for the most part officially declared ownerless and heirless, their owners having disappeared during the Nazi holocaust. In order to organise the disposal of these literary treasures, a trust was established, and the collection which was assigned to Jews' College was found to be particularly rich in Talmudic, Rabbinic Codes and Responsa and Hebrew Biblical commentaries, and is thus of inestimable value and importance to the College in its work of instructing its students in traditional Hebraic and Judaic sources.

Any account of the composition of the Library must refer also to its manuscripts and incunabula. The manuscript collection, of which a catalogue has been published, includes the historic Halberstamm Collection, numbering over 400 items, and also

manuscripts from the collections of Sir Moses Montefiore and Dr. Leopold Zunz. The manuscripts, all in Hebrew and emanating mainly from 14th-18th century Europe, cover all fields of Jewish scholarship and are of interest also to students of Hebrew palaeography and bibliography. The incunables, though few in numbers, form a treasured part of the Library, and originate mainly from the Library of the Rev. A.L.Green.

It seems now that the heydey of large-scale benefactions is over; nevertheless, as in the past, the Library continues to acquire modern works, mainly in Hebrew and English, and also receives all new Hebrew publications of the leading religious publishing house in Israel.

The Library of to-day, has sections devoted to all branches of traditional Jewish scholarship, such as Talmud, Rabbinic legal Codes, Responsa, History of the Jews, Jewish liturgy and literature, philosophy and ethics, Hebrew and Semitic linguistics, homiletics, Israel and Zionism, Festschriften and Periodicals, and in addition has a quick-reference section. Although most of the publications received to-day are in Hebrew and English, there are still in use innumerable books in other European languages which bear glorious witness to the Jewish scholarship of a bygone age. Furthermore, the Library currently receives nearly 100 periodicals, Jewish and non-Jewish in a variety of languages.

The Library, in the course of its 100 years' history has perforce undergone many vicissitudes, including 2 World Wars and evacuations, and only recently underwent probably the greatest upheaval of its time, when, with its aggregate stock of nearly 60,000 volumes, and collections of manuscripts, incunables and portraits, it recently moved into its modern and spacious new home (already described elsewhere). It is fervently hoped that, with its grand new facilities, it will be able to fulfil still better its traditional functions, not only as the Library of a college of advanced Jewish learning, but also as a centre of research for those needing and desiring to delve deeply into Jewish, Rabbinic and allied subjects, in order "to magnify the Torah (Teaching) and to glorify it".

Library facilities: Although the Library, being a College Library, is primarily intended to serve the needs of its staff, students and graduates, it extends its facilities also to other classes of readers. The use of the Library for Reference purposes is granted to all bona fide students and scholars, and direct lending facilities are also granted to the academic staff of other University colleges. As the Library does not, however, undertake postal lending, students of other colleges borrow books through their college libraries, which send authorised messengers, and members of the public borrow on application at their local public libraries through the National Central Library,

which similarly arranges for the collection of inter-library loans.

The Library also serves as a Jewish information centre and answers enquiries on all Jewish subjects whether they are made personally, by letter or by telephone.

Furthermore, the Library often arranges for the micro-filming or photostating of any of its stock in response to applications made by scholars both in this country and abroad.

Ruth P. Lehmann.

Guide to manuscript materials on Southern Asia

With the aid of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, the School of Oriental and African Studies has embarked upon the preparation of a guide to western language manuscript materials on Southern Asia in libraries and private collections in Britain and Ireland. The area coming within the purview of the scheme includes the Indian Sub-continent and the adjacent territories - Ceylon, Nepal, Bhuton, Sikkim, Afghanistan, Tibet; South-East Asia; and the islands of the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Although it is expected that the bulk of the materials to be recorded will be historical in character, work on all subjects relating to the area will be included.

It is proposed to send representatives to visit all the libraries thought most likely to contain relevant materials, but the Librarian of the School would be glad to hear of any individual manuscript or collection in public or private hands which might not otherwise come to his notice. Information should either be sent to him at the following address, or be notified by telephone (LANgham 9021).

School of Oriental and African Studies,
University of London,
London, W. C. 1.

SCOTAPLL visit to Canterbury

Arrangements have been made for members of SCOTAPLL to visit Canterbury on Tuesday, 14th April 1959. There will be time for a short visit to the Cathedral, and Mr. H.Blakeney has kindly arranged to show members the Chapter Library.

The Annual General Meeting of SCOTAPPL will be held at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, by kind invitation of the Subwarden, Canon A. D. Kelley, and tea will be served there after the visit to the Cathedral.

The party will travel by the 11.35 a.m. train from Victoria, arriving 1.32 p.m., and return by the 6.10 p.m., arriving Victoria 8.10 p.m. There is a pullman car on the train, but there is an extra charge for using it, and it is thought that members may prefer to bring lunch with them.

Those intending to join the party should notify Miss Edmondston at the address given below not later than 2nd April, enclosing cheque or Postal Order for 15s.6d. (cost of the return ticket) made out to the Standing Conference of Theological and Philosophical Libraries in London. Please meet at the barrier to Platform 2 not later than 11.20 a.m.

Miss Elizabeth Edmondston,
c/o Sion College Library,
Victoria Embankment,
London, E.C.4.

Telephone: FLEet Street 7983.